

Praise Tramples the Enemy's Plans

Praise activates God's power in our lives, and nowhere is that more evident than in the realm of spiritual battle. The authentic praise of God empowers us to defeat the devil.

Before we use the truth of God against the attacks of Satan, we first need to answer the two most important questions in the Bible. The first is the one Jesus asked His disciples: "What do you think about the Christ? Whose son is he?" (Matt. 22:42). A person's destiny in eternity hinges on his or her answer. Jesus made it clear that "if you do not believe that I am the one I claim to be, you will indeed die in your sins" (John 8:24).

Who Is Man?

The second most important question we need to answer is found in Psalm 8:4: "What is man?" We need to answer this one with God's truth, not man's theory. Is man only a highly developed animal, as Darwin taught? Is man an undeveloped child, as Freud believed? Is man a mere economic factor, as Karl Marx taught?

King David reflects God's truth in the Psalms:

"You made him [mankind] a little lower than the heavenly beings and crowned him with glory and honor. You made him ruler over the works of your hands; you put everything under his feet" (Ps. 8:5-6).

Man cast away his crown of glory and honor when he sinned against God in the Garden of Eden. The God-Man Jesus Christ has returned that honor, dignity and authority to all men and women who come under the cover of His saving power. Our position today as believers in Christ is once again a position

of being crowned with glory and honor.

Authority to Defeat Satan

Why is this important in our ongoing battle with Satan? We find the answer in Psalm 8, which most scholars believe David wrote after he defeated Goliath. This is the testimony of a short, slightly built shepherd who took on a 10-foot heavyweight jousting champion and won. But the battle between David and Goliath has a far deeper meaning than simply a Hebrew shepherd boy conquering the most famous warrior in the Philistine army. The story of David and Goliath is a foreshadowing of the ultimate spiritual battle that was waged a thousand years later between Jesus Christ and Satan. In fact, David's defeat of Goliath is a model for all spiritual warfare in the church today.

Goliath was Satan's champion; David, like Jesus after him, was God's champion. Goliath lost, permanently, due to the mortal wound he suffered. Satan also lost, ultimately, in his showdown with Jesus at the cross. Satan continues to lose as believers take authority over the territory he controls on this earth—including his control of human hearts and minds.

Your proclamation of truth through praise—and especially your answers to the questions “Who is the Christ?” and “What is man in Christ?”—will make the difference between winning or losing the spiritual battles you face. It is our praise of God that reveals what we believe about the Christ, whose Son He is, and what we believe about man and his relationship to God.

God, the Victor

Our proclamation of God's truth in praise calls upon the power of the victor who has already won the battle against Satan. God alone has the power to silence our foe, the avenger (see Ps. 8:2). It is no accident that Psalm 8 begins with a proclamation of praise: “O Lord, our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth!” (v. 1).

David then goes on to describe the “position” of the Lord:

“You have set your glory above the heavens. From the lips of children and infants you have ordained praise because of your enemies, to silence the foe and the avenger” (Ps. 8:1-2).

If you chart the course of conflict in the Middle East, a great deal of it has to do with “vengeance” battles—the old eye-for-an-eye mindset that is still at work between enemies. Goliath did not seek the death of all Israelites. No, he wanted to put all of Israel in subjection. The winner of this battle would have the right to force into slavery all the people of the losing nation. Enslavement would grant power and authority to the victor and would bring pain and suffering, a tearing apart of families, and a loss of worship traditions to the losing side.

How to Win the Battle

To win the battle against Satan’s vengeance, you must praise God for sending Jesus to win the eternal war for your soul. Praise God for resurrecting Jesus on the third day so that you have the hope of eternal life. Praise Him that you heard the gospel, and He convicted you of your sinful nature by the power of His Holy Spirit so that you desired to receive Jesus as your Savior. Then praise God for securing once and for all the redemption of all who believe in Jesus Christ. Praise God that He loves you enough to lead you daily so you might be conformed to the image of Christ.

This has been excerpted from Chapter 11 of Empowered by Praise: Experiencing God’s Presence and Power When You Give Him Glory (Charisma House).{eoa}

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